

SNC Reference Number
(enter if previously assigned)

PROJECT SUMMARY

County: Mariposa

Applicant: Upper Merced River Watershed Council

**Project Title: POST-FIRE INVASIVE WEED MANAGEMENT IN THE UPPER
MERCED RIVER WATERSHED**

PROJECT GOAL

**Protect and enhance the ecological health of the Upper Merced River Watershed
through post-fire invasive weed management**

PROJECT SCOPE

The Upper Merced River Watershed is a highly diverse area that attracts four million visitors each year and supplies 70% of the San Joaquin's agricultural water. Yellow starthistle (YST) and Italian thistle have formed monocultures along the Merced River from Briceburg to the confluence of the North Fork. These monocultures crowd out native vegetation and reduce biodiversity while consuming large amounts of water. Seeds from invasive plants are carried downstream to spread into valuable agricultural land.

The work to be funded under this grant is part of a large ongoing invasives project. In addition to partnering with the National Park Service (NPS) and US Forest Service (USFS) on invasives control, the Upper Merced River Watershed Council (UMRWC) has combined forces with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for the past seven years on an enormously successful YST removal project. Recently the BLM identified the most effective treatments to address vegetation recovery in the aftermath of the 34,000 acre Telegraph Fire. Statewide research has documented the "enhanced germination" of YST that takes place immediately after a fire. If that increased infestation can be managed, the end effect will be the significant depletion of the YST and Italian thistle seed banks. This grant will fund the next two seasons of an aggressive integrated invasive management program within burned areas along 7 miles of river habitat. To be effective, invasive removal must begin in spring, 2009.

Major tasks will be planning and coordinating with partners the areas to be targeted, mapping populations of thistle, and hiring and supervising crews to manually attack these invasives. Work products will include specific treatment plans and maps that document the size of pre and post treatment populations.

The expected outcomes of the project fit into the overall and long-term goals of the UMRWC by maintaining prior control of YST on the 2-mile section of trail below the Mountain King Mine, managing invasive thistles on targeted steep

hillsides adjacent to the 5-mile Briceburg Road along the river, and expanding the target species to include other invasives present.

Additional funding to accomplish these goals will be supplied in the form of in-kind goods and services from BLM - \$22,600; USFS - \$3,500; Natural Resources Conservation Service - \$2,700; NPS - \$6,000; Sierra Nevada Alliance - \$5,000.

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

William Haigh, Bureau of Land Management; Niki Nicholas, National Park Service; Joanna M. Clines, US Forest Service; Dawn Afman, Natural Resource Conservation Service; Megan Suarez-Brand, Sierra Nevada Alliance; Brenda Ostrom, Mountain Meadow Farms; Kris Randal, Yosemite Area Audubon; Jeannie Habben, Central Sierra Watershed Committee and Chowchilla Red Top RCD

SNC PROJECT DELIVERABLES AND SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Identify treatment areas and develop implementation plan	May 2010
Provide pre and post data	October 2010
Purchase tools and equipment	July 2009
Collaborate with BLM to hire, train, and supervise crews	August 2010
Provide educational outreach	October 2010
Participate in local and statewide invasive meetings/trainings	November 2010
Write and submit Progress Reports	September 2009 and every 6 months thereafter
Write and submit Final Report	November 2010

SNC PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
INCLUDE COSTS FOR STAFF, TASKS, DELIVERABLES AND PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES	\$
Project Management & Field Management Staff (includes Progress Reports and Final Report)	\$40,800
Invasive Species Control Crews	\$9,100
Equipment/Displays	\$2,000
Conferences/Trainings	\$5,400
Administration	\$8,600
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
SNC GRANT TOTAL	\$65,900